
A NEW *VITEX* (VERBENACEAE) FROM MADAGASCAR

The eastern rainforests remain the least known, and currently most threatened, of the diverse vegetation types of Madagascar. Recent exploration of the forests around the Bay of Antongil, north of Maroantsetra, and on the Masoala Peninsula, the largest remaining tract of eastern rainforest, has yielded the following spectacular new species of *Vitex* L.

Vitex masoalensis G. E. Schatz, sp. nov. TYPE: Madagascar. Toamasina: Masoala Peninsula, 6 hr. walk inland from Antalavia along Antalavia River, 15°46'S, 50°03'E, 450 m, 17 Apr. 1987 (fl, fr), Schatz & Suzon 1353 (holotype, MO; isotypes, K, MO, P, TAN). Figure 1.

Arbor 7-metralis non ramosa simulans *V. hirsutissima* J. G. Baker, sed foliis epetiolatis, folioliis aequalis, laminis glabrescentibus, foliis consociatis inflorescentis (= bracteae) 3-foliolatis, et corolla alba.

Unbranched tree 7 m tall, 8 cm diam., the bark smooth, gray, the vegetative bud densely ferruginous-hirsute. Leaves restricted to several nodes at the apex, opposite, palmately compound, epetiolate, 5-foliolate; leaflets \pm equal, chartaceous, subcoriaceous, somewhat bullate when fresh, obovate, 56–92 cm long, 13–24 cm broad, the apex cuspidate, the base long-attenuate, the margins undulate along basal half, the venation eucamptodromous to weakly brochidodromous with ca. 20 veins per side, the midrib slightly elevated adaxially, prominently elevated abaxially and very stout toward the base, the lateral veins slightly impressed adaxially and elevated abaxially, the upper laminar surface glabrous, minutely foveolate, the midrib sparsely hirsute, the lower surface glabrous, very sparsely puberulous to hirsute along the midrib; petiolule 1–2 cm long, very stout and swollen at the point of attachment. Inflorescence a much-branched, condensed cyme borne in fascicles along the main trunk, i.e., trunciflorous, sometimes associated with foliaceous bracts; bracts 3-foliolate, the leaflets \pm equal, chartaceous, subcoriaceous, sessile, narrowly elliptic to oblanceolate, 29–33 cm long, 3.5–6 cm broad, the apex long-acuminate to cuspidate, the base attenuate, the margins entire,

the venation eucamptodromous to weakly brochidodromous with ca. 11 lateral veins per side, the midrib impressed adaxially, prominently elevated abaxially, the upper laminar surface glabrous, the midrib sparsely hirsute, the lower surface very sparsely appressed pubescent, essentially glabrous; pedicel slender, 0.5–0.8 cm long, densely ferruginous-hirsute, bearing 1–several densely ferruginous-hirsute, linear to filiform bracteoles; calyx campanulate, 0.5 cm long and broad, the 5 lobes apiculate, 0.4 cm long, densely ferruginous-hirsute; corolla zygomorphic, short-tubular, 1.5–1.8 cm long, 0.2–0.3 cm broad at the base, to 1.2 cm broad at the apex, white, fading to pinkish white, with longitudinal venation evident, the upper 2 and central 2 lobes triangular, 0.7 cm long, 0.6 cm broad, the apex acute, the margin entire, the lower lobe (lip) narrowly elliptic, 1.2 cm long, 0.5 cm broad, the apex rounded, the margin crenulate, all the lobes ferruginous-hirsute outside, glabrous inside; stamens 4, adnate to the corolla 0.7 cm from the base, the filaments 2.5 cm long, white, basally hirsute for 0.6–0.7 cm, the trichomes to 0.2 cm long, the anthers 0.2 cm long, pink fading to gray-blue, 2-celled; style 2–3 cm long, white, the stigma bifid, the branches 0.3 cm long. Calyx accrescent in fruit, cotyliform, enclosing $\frac{1}{2}$ of the fruit. Fruit a drupe, globose, 0.8 cm diam., pink turning to purple, the exocarp glossy, the mesocarp thin, somewhat fleshy, the endocarp hard.

With over 40 endemic species, Madagascar represents an important center of radiation for the genus *Vitex* (Moldenke, 1956). *Vitex masoalensis* is undoubtedly most closely related to *V. hirsutissima* J. G. Baker, also known from the Masoala Peninsula, with which the former shares a similar monocaulous habit and trunciflorous inflorescences. From *V. hirsutissima*, the new species differs in having sessile leaves with the leaflets all more or less equal. In addition, the lamina is soon glabrescent, lacking the persistent hirsute pubescence characteristic of *V. hirsutissima*. The large, foliaceous bracts sometimes associated with inflorescences are three-foliolate in *V. masoalensis* versus one-foliolate in *V. hirsutissima*.

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FIGURE 1. *Vitex masoalensis* (Schatz & Suzon 1353).—A. Flower.—B. Fruit.—C. Adaxial surface of leaf.—D. Abaxial surface of leaf showing swollen petiolules, and detail of venation.—E. Foliaceous bract associated with an inflorescence.—F. Habit.

LITERATURE CITED

MOLDENKE, H. N. 1956. Verbenacées. Flore de Madagascar et des Comores. Famille 174: 1-174.

—George E. Schatz, *Missouri Botanical Garden, P.O. Box 299, St. Louis, Missouri 63166, U.S.A.*